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## **Construction to begin on major Washington power line**

**VANCOUVER, Wash.** – The Bonneville Power Administration has awarded a \$33.5 million contract to begin construction of the 63-mile Schultz-Wautoma power line in central Washington. Total cost of the project is \$175 million.

Work on this key link in the regional power grid is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2005. Lou Driessen, project manager, said Maslonka & Associates, Inc. of Mesa, Ariz., was selected to build the transmission line based on its low bid and construction capabilities. Relocation of a section of the Hanford-John Day line has begun and construction of the rest of the line will commence in the spring, with scheduled completion in the fall of 2005.

“The amount of power that needs to move through this area has increased due to regional demand growth and construction of new power plants,” said Driessen. “This new line will improve reliability while increasing electrical transmission transfer capabilities east and west of the Cascade Mountains.”

The 500-kilovolt line connects the new Wautoma Substation, south of Priest Rapids Dam on the Columbia River, with the Schultz Substation, north of Ellensburg. All of the line parallels or uses existing rights of way. BPA will use helicopters to erect towers to minimize environmental impacts. A considerable portion of the line will be equipped with devices to divert birds from overhead ground wires.

The line will carry enough power to serve a city the size of Seattle. Total cost of the project, including substations, is \$175 million.

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